

REMARKS

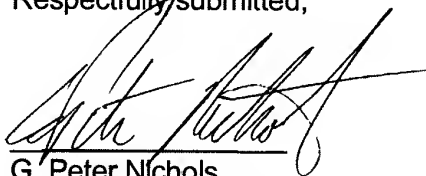
All the claims remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rahm in view of Watanabe. The current claims require that the raffinate from the solvent extraction step has an acid concentration of at least 250 g/L of sulfuric acid. Support for the present amendment can be found in claim 14, for example.

Rahm as modified by Watanabe does not teach or suggest the present method. There is no teaching or suggestion to provide a solvent extraction step subsequent to the removal of iron sulfate such that the raffinate contains at least 250 g/L of sulfuric acid. Accordingly, the claims are patentable over Rahm and Watanabe.

With respect to the obviousness-type double patenting rejections, they will be addressed upon notification that the present claims are allowable.

It is believed that all the claims are in condition to be allowed. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney for the Applicant at (312) 321-4276 if such communication would expedite allowance of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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